

# Press Release

## HARFORD COUNTY GOVERNMENT

### Department of Community Services



#### PUBLIC SAFETY

"Ensuring a Safe  
Harford"

#### EDUCATION

"Preparing Now,  
Building for the Future"

#### EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT

"Governing Smarter"

#### ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

"Growing and Sustaining  
Harford's Prosperity"

#### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

"Protecting Our  
Environment"

#### QUALITY LIVING

"Safeguarding What is  
Important to Harford  
County Citizens"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 23, 2012

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### **Elizabeth Smart to give Keynote Address at the 2012 Cherish the Child Symposium**

(Bel Air, MD) - - The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Child Protection event, *Cherish the Child*, will be held on April 27, 2012 at Mountain Christian Church, located at 1824 Mountain Road in Joppa. The planning committee for the Symposium is honored to announce that Elizabeth Smart will provide the keynote address.

The kidnapping survivor, activist for abused children, and ABC News contributor will headline the event; this is the first time Ms. Smart is making an appearance in Maryland to speak about her experiences and promote safety legislation to help prevent abductions.

*Cherish the Child* is Harford County's Annual Child Protection Awareness Symposium. It is designed for professionals, paraprofessionals and any community members who are interested in the protection of our children. *Cherish the Child* seeks to educate, inform and support those individuals who devote their time and talents to keeping children safe. Workshops are held throughout the day providing valuable information on the latest trends in child protection and treatment.

The abduction of Elizabeth Smart was one of the most followed child abduction cases of our time. Elizabeth was abducted on June 5, 2002 and her captors controlled her by threatening to kill her and her family if she tried to escape. Fortunately, the police safely returned Elizabeth back to her family on March 12, 2003 after being held prisoner for 9 months. Through this traumatic experience Elizabeth has become an advocate for change related to child abduction, recovery programs and national legislation.

Elizabeth triumphantly testified before her captor and the world about the very private nightmare she suffered during her abduction, which lead to a conviction. Elizabeth is currently involved in the "*Elizabeth Smart Foundation*", and she has helped promote The National AMBER Alert, The Adam Walsh Child Protection & Safety Act and other safety legislation to help prevent abductions. Elizabeth is also a News Correspondent for ABC News.

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Elizabeth's example and life is a daily demonstration that there really is life after a tragic event. Her speech not only tells her story, but also discusses topics such as overcoming extreme adversity and not allowing your past to dictate your life's future.

For information about registration and the Cherish the Child Symposium, please visit the website at:  
[www.cherishthechildsymposium.com](http://www.cherishthechildsymposium.com).

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"Preserving Harford's past; promoting Harford's future"